

Appln. No. 10/627,047
Docket No. H1535-00020
Response to Office Action of February 2, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

As a result of this Amendment, claims 1-3, 5-13, 12-24, and 26-32 are under active consideration in the subject patent application.

In the Official Action, the Examiner has:

(1) rejected claims 1, 2, 5-7, 10-12, 15-17, 20-22, 26-28, 31, and 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,311,597, issued to Schroth et al.;

(2) rejected claims 1-3, 8, 9, 11-13, 18-24, and 29-32 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,517,879, issued to Andersson;

(3) objected to claims 4, 14, and 25 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, and indicating that claims 4, 14, and 25 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims; and

(4) identified prior art made of record and not relied upon but considered pertinent to Applicant's disclosure.

With regard to Items 1 -3, Applicants have amended claims 4, 14, and 25 and cancelled claims 1, 11, and 22. More particularly, claim 4 has been amended to include the subject matter defined by now cancelled independent claim 1, claim 14 has been amended to include the subject matter defined by now cancelled independent claim 11, and claim 25 has been amended to include the subject matter defined by now cancelled independent claim 22. As

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acknowledged by the Examiner, claims 4, 14 and 25 were allowable as filed, but required presentation in independent form for issuance of a patent grant and not for reasons of patentability. Amended independent claims 4, 14, and 25 are allowable for all of the reasons set forth by the Examiner in the Official Action. Dependent claims 2-3, 5-6, 8, and 10 have been amended so as to now be dependent directly from allowable claim 4, and are allowable at least through dependency. Dependent claims 12-13, 15, 18, and 20 are now dependent directly or indirectly from allowable claim 14, and are allowable at least through dependency. Dependent claims 23-24, 26, 29, and 31 are now dependent directly or indirectly from allowable claim 25, and are allowable at least through dependency. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejections are requested.

With regard to Item 4, Applicants have considered the prior art references identified by the Examiner as pertinent and determined that none of them, taken alone, or in any valid combination with the Schroth et al., or the Andersson references anticipates or renders obvious the present invention.

Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

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If a telephone conference would be of assistance in advancing prosecution of the above-identified application, Applicants' undersigned Attorney invites the Examiner to telephone him at 717-237-5516.

Date:

5/2/05

Respectfully Submitted,



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